

The Spy Who Came Over To Unravel an Old Mystery

By Sally Quinn

In August 1941 a Yugoslav named Dusko Popov came to the United States to deliver a message to the FBI.

Popov, a counterspy in Germany for British Intelligence, had, he says, information as to when, where, why and by whom Pearl Harbor would be attacked.

He purportedly gave the information to his FBI contact in New York, a man named Foxworth, who allegedly passed it along to J. Edgar Hoover. Nothing was ever done with the information, he says.

"I am just here trying to find out why," said Popov last week in an interview. "It's been eating me for 30 years now."

And he's causing a rumble in official circles.

Popov, now 62, is a tanned, attractive, well-bred-looking European who lives on the French Riviera in a palace with his 32-year-old, blonde Swedish wife. He also just happens to be a model for Ian Fleming's James Bond, and the author of "Spy-Counter-Spy," a book about his adventures as a World War II spy.

As part of the book promotion, Popov taped two TV programs—described by the producer as "spy shop talk"—with James McCord of the Watergate burglary team. The first was scheduled to go on the air on WRC-TV's "Take It From Here" program this morning, but has

been pulled off at McCord's request.

Popov has been unable to reveal his past activities or the Pearl Harbor information until now because he was restricted by the British Official Secrets Act which kept him from writing about it until it was decided that no one involved was either alive or could be endangered by his information.

Now that it's all out in the open after all these years, Popov, who says Hoover once accused him of being a "Malkanese playboy," has come to the United States to promote his book and get some answers.

He claims he met with J. Edgar Hoover twice, both encounters unpleasant. It seems that Hoover did not approve of his luxurious lifestyle as a spy (a Park Avenue penthouse, a house in Locust Valley Long Island, skiing in Sun Valley, The Stork Club and El Morocco every night) and assigned two FBI agents to follow him to Florida where he was having an assignation with a beautiful English woman. The agents threatened to arrest him for taking someone over a state line for illicit purposes.

Outraged by Popov's charges against the late FBI director, Clarence Kelley, the new FBI director, has written a letter to Popov's

See POPOV, B3, Col. 1

By Gerald Martineau—The Washington Post

Dusko Popov, counterspy: "I met for months with an agent, my FBI contact, with elaborate secrecy, only to see him identified as an FBI agent on a movie newsreel. Blunders, blunders, blunders!"

POPOV, From B1

publishers, Grosset and Dunlap, in which he claims, "the FBI most certainly did not receive information from Mr. Dusko Popov which indicated the Japanese would attack Pearl Harbor. . . Indeed, Mr. Popov's highly imaginative account is bolstered by two al-

leged meetings he had with Mr. Hoover. Popov's description of these meetings attacks Mr. Hoover's character and his intelligence. The meetings simply never took place. Mr. Popov never personally met Mr. Hoover."

"Either Mr. Kelley is uninformed, or he is lying," Popov said the other day, lighting a Kool and leaning

forward with a smile. "And I won't stop until I find the truth."

Kelly was unavailable for comment, but Special Agent Tom Harrington of the FBI's information office spoke for him. "I was involved in drafting the letter," he said, "but we're not going to get into a controversy about it. Were saying

Mr. Popov met with two agents but we're saying we have no record of his meeting with Mr. Hoover. Please don't say we're calling Mr. Popov a liar. Besides, we can't dig up Mr. Hoover to find out, can we?"

Enter a third party: McCord. McCord, a former FBI agent, agreed to go on the local TV program with Popov.

"He had obviously been briefed on what to say by the FBI," charged Popov. Had left for the day.

"He denied the taping that it could ever have happened. He wouldn't even look at the evidence. But then I don't think he really knows. I don't think he was around then anyway. Wouldn't that be an irony?"

McCord was in his office but was "not available to come to the telephone." Later, a voice sounding much like McCord's answered the phone and said McCord had left for the day.

Sheila Weidenfeld, producer of the half-hour "Take it From Here" morning talk show, said yesterday that

she had lined up the two to appear as spy pros to talk about "how Watergate could have worked."

McCord, she said, called after having "second thoughts" and asked that the two taped half-hour programs not be shown. He mentioned Judge John J. Sirica's order that McCord should not give lectures or

write articles because of the possibility of prejudicial publicity and of profiting from the Watergate wrongdoings.

"I don't know why he had second thoughts," the producer said. "We had talked about Judge Sirica's ruling and worked it out. It's now in the hands of the attor-

neys."

Popov insists that he is not an idealist, but believes that he can make this country immune to future mistakes by getting to the bottom of this one. "If responsible people could be made to answer for this, then it wouldn't happen again," he said. "Like Watergate, for instance."

"But I would like to get the FBI out of its foxhole," he said. "They were so stupid during that time. Hoover wanted to protect his empire and didn't want anyone else getting the credit for doing anything. I met for months with an agent, my FBI contact, with elaborate secrecy, only to see him identified as an FBI agent on a movie newsreel. Blunders, blunders, blunders!"

Even though Popov was finally authorized by British Intelligence to write his book, there were many

names he was forced to change or leave out. (Enter a fourth party, the new British Ambassador here, Sir Peter Ramsbotham who was, during World War II, the Whip of the Conservative Party. "I was not allowed to quote him by name but he is definitely in the book.")

When Popov first became a counter spy for the British Intelligence he did it because he was passionately against the Nazis.

But when asked whether or not he would like to be a Superspy again, he replied emphatically, "No. Because I am 30 years older and I became wiser."

He took a long drag from his cigarette, straightened his beautifully tailored suit, looked directly ahead and smiled as he blew out the smoke.

"But then," he said, "if you asked me if I'm a spy and I were a good spy, I would always say no."

